

Zafrul: I never concealed any facts on economy

KUALA LUMPUR: Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz said he had never concealed any facts in order to hide the actual situation concerning the country's economy.

He said this in response to a claim by former prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who said that Malaysia's financial situation is more troubled than what is being painted by the federal government based on a current report received from Zafrul.

Zafrul, in a statement today, said the report given to the National Recovery Council (NRC) secretariat, in which Muhyiddin is the chairman, was similar to other reports submitted by other members of the cabinet irrespective of which parties they are from under the current ruling coalition.

"As the chairman of the council, he needs the reports to make the right decision in assisting the prime minister (Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob) to steer the country's recovery post-Covid-19 pandemic.

"In fact, the facts in the report are the same facts which I have repeated to the cabinet and members of the public.

"I never hide (any facts), be it through press statements (issued by the Finance Ministry), through my comments during any forums, in my parliamentary reply as well as reports issued by agencies such as Bank Negara, the **Department of Statistics** and others," said Tengku Zafrul in a Facebook post.

He said that was why the ministry had, since last year, spoke about the Fiscal Responsibility Act to prevent issues such as 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), Suria Strategic Energy Resources Sdn Bhd (SSER) and others from recurring.

He also included links of publications that published his articles on the government's intention to introduce the Act.

During the launch of Perikatan Nasional's (PN) election machinery in Johor Lama, Johor on Friday, Muhyiddin was quoted as saying that the country's situation was not as rosy as it seemed.

"I had asked the Finance Minister to deliver a report. I will leak it in time on the position of our national finances," Muhyiddin, who is the PN chairman, was quoted as saying.

Zafrul said people were generally aware of the country's economic situation due to the negative impact brought about by Covid-19.

Therefore, he said, the main focus at the moment was to drive the country's recovery in order to restore the livelihoods of the people.

He said this would be achieved through creating new employment opportunities, bringing investment into the country and providing assistance to businesses, as well as other strategies as outlined in the JaminKerja and SemarakNiaga initiatives in the 2022 Budget.

"We are now on the right path in which economic activities, be it from the macro, businesses or individual perspectives, are in the process of recovering based on several indicators such as employment market and others," he said.

<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2022/02/773025/zafrul-i-never-concealed-any-facts-economy>